



United States Department of Agriculture

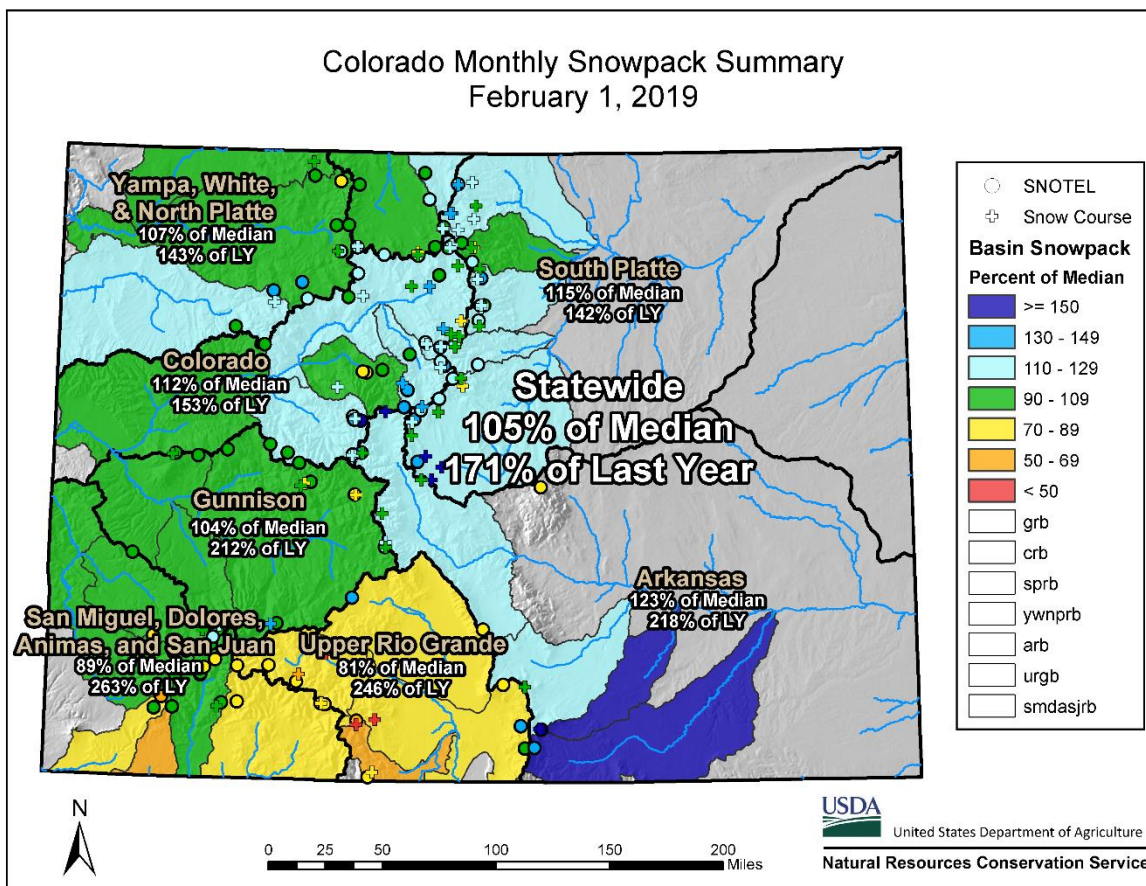
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News Release

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Snowpack Improves Across Colorado

Denver, CO – February 6th, 2019 – A consistent pattern of weather systems throughout much of January brought snow to the state, particularly, storms during the 15th through the 24th of January provided the added boost to push statewide Colorado snowpack to above normal for the first time this calendar year. Statewide mountain snowpack improved from 94% of normal on January 1 to 105% of normal on February 1. More notable gains were made in the combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan Basins up 23 percent from last month to 89% of normal and in the Gunnison a 13 percent improvement to 104% of normal on February 1, 2019. All other basins indicated snowpack improvements but to a lesser degree. “Southern portions of the state currently show more than twice the snowpack present at this time last year, a stark contrast to last year’s shortage,” comments Brian Domonkos, Snow Survey Supervisor with the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Colorado Snow Survey Program.



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Double the snowpack of last year is a step in the right direction as reservoirs remain low. On February 1, statewide reservoirs total 83% of normal with the lowest levels remaining in the Gunnison, Rio Grande and combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas & San Juan basins where reservoir storage is 61%, 79% and 57% of normal respectively. Fortunately for the Gunnison River basin, snowpack and year-to-date precipitation indicators are currently above normal and considerably better than last year

While better conditions resulted from the increased precipitation, year-to-date precipitation starting on October 1, 2018, in the Rio Grande and combined Southwestern watersheds both remain below normal at 91%. Statewide year to date precipitation is 102% of normal on February 1 up from 97% last month.

Streamflow forecasts on February 1, 2019 point to a much more positive runoff season than last year's forecasts. Projections are generally consistent in certain areas of the state: near to slightly above normal in central Colorado, near normal in Northern Colorado and below to slightly below normal in Southern Colorado. Keep in mind February forecasts require good judgement as conditions may still change with nearly one third of the snow accumulation season remaining. Domonkos cautions, "Overall conditions are promising, snowpack is near normal and much better than last year, but January's above average precipitation will need to become a trend in the coming months to recover from last year."

Colorado's Snowpack and Reservoir Storage as of February 6, 2019

BASIN	% MEDIAN SNOWPACK	% LAST YR.'S SNOWPACK	% AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE	LAST YEAR'S % AVERAGE RESERVOIR STORAGE
GUNNISON	104	212	61	104
COLORADO	112	153	91	116
SOUTH PLATTE	115	142	103	110
NORTH PLATTE	107	130	--	--
YAMPA/WHITE	109	158	102	120
ARKANSAS	123	218	89	140
RIO GRANDE	81	246	79	122
SMDASJ*	89	263	57	105
STATEWIDE	105	171	83	115

*Combined San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan Basins

For more detailed information about January 1 mountain snowpack refer to the [February 1, 2019 Colorado Water Supply Outlook Report](#). For the most up to date information about Colorado snowpack and water supply related information, refer to the [Colorado Snow Survey website](#).